



THE THIRTY-YEAR JOURNEY

This session is designed to introduce the key dates and to put the Roman invasion of Britain, and specifically Cumbria, into historical context. It aims to provide children with an understanding of why it took the Romans some thirty years to reach Cumbria after they first landed on the south coast.

CURRICULUM LINKS: HISTORY 1A, 1B, 5A, 5B, 6, 7, 8A, 9 MATHS 2A PE

OVERVIEW

LEARNING ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY DETAILS	LEARNING INTENTIONS	RESOURCES
STARTER whole class	<i>What do pupils already know about the Romans?</i> Pupils write their ideas on white boards or paper, then share them in a whole-class thought shower.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish prior learning • Introduce relevant key words and concepts 	
TIMELINE whole class	<i>When did the Romans invade Britain and Cumbria?</i> Using the cards provided, construct a timeline with the class, to put the Roman invasion in historical context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce key dates and events for this programme of study. • Develop an understanding of the timescales involved. • Relate to dates already understood, e.g. 1066. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeline cards (CD Resource 1)
A THIRTY YEAR JOURNEY groups whole class individual	<i>Why did it take the Romans thirty years to get to Cumbria?</i> In groups, pupils tackle an obstacle course (suggested layout on p.7), representing the Romans' journey to Cumbria. They time one member, and then the whole group, walking ^x the route, then tackling the obstacles. Pupils record results in a table and think about how their results could explain the slow Roman advance north.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make the length of time the Romans took to reach Cumbria, and the length of time they remained in Cumbria, meaningful. • To understand that the Romans encountered many obstacles, both physical and human, on their journey through Britain. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obstacle course layout (p.7) • Recording sheets (CD Resource 2) • Stopwatches
PLENARY whole class	Show the children print outs or projections of the Celtic Britain map, showing the main tribes, and the Roman Britain map showing the main roads and settlements. Discuss the different kinds of obstacles that could have prevented the Romans moving swiftly through Britain, e.g. setting up forts, roads and infrastructure and moving from strongholds into new territory.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand that the process of invasion involved negotiating obstacles and therefore took time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roman Britain map (CD Resource 3) • Celtic Britain map (CD Resource 4)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

THE ROMAN INVASION

The Romans successfully invaded Britain in AD 43. It took another thirty years for them to complete the march north and set up forts and garrisons in north west England. On their journey through Britain they encountered many and varied obstacles. Some of the obstacles were physical barriers like rivers, thick woodland and ranges of hills. However, it was the various tribes they met along the way that caused the most disruption.

In AD 61 the Iceni and Trinovantes tribes revolted, under the leadership of Boudicca, and destroyed the major Roman towns of Camulodunum (Colchester), Verulamium (St. Albans) and Londinium (London) before they were defeated in a battle in the Midlands.

In AD 69 the Romans encountered another revolt, by the northern Brigantes tribe. The Brigantes brought the Romans advance to a halt in the area now known as Yorkshire. The revolt was eventually quashed by Cerialis, Governor of Britain. It was during his rule that the Romans were able to move north-west towards Cumbria and set up a fort in Carlisle (AD 72/3).

The Ordovices tribe in Wales posed another threat to Roman rule over the north-west. There were two campaigns against the Ordovices. The first was after the Boudiccan revolt and was led by Suetonius Paulinus. A second campaign, led by Gaius Julius Agricola took place in the 70s, but it was Cerialis' successor, Frontinus who eventually subdued the Welsh.

Agricola went on to annex the territory of the Brigantes at some point after AD 77.

THE ROMAN ARMY

The majority of the Roman army would have made the whole of the journey up to Cumbria, around 350 miles, on foot. Campaigns to conquer new territory took place in the summer months.

The Roman army was highly organised. Officers in the higher ranks were elected politicians, but most soldiers were employees of the state who signed up to the army for several years at a time.

The army was divided into two parts – the legions and the auxiliary forces. Legionaries were all citizens of the Roman Empire, whereas auxiliaries were warriors from provinces conquered by the Romans.

In the legions much of the everyday work was done by officers called centurions. A centurion commanded a 'century' of eighty soldiers. Centuries were grouped into cohorts and ten cohorts made up a legion. Cohorts 2-10 were each made up of six centuries, making a total of 480 men per cohort. Cohort 1 was larger, and included five double-strength centuries, making 800 ordinary soldiers, along with all the other legion staff like medics and surveyors. Finally each legion had 120 horsemen who acted as scouts. The total strength of a legion was therefore around 5,500 men. The Romans invaded Britain with four legions, but later reduced the number stationed here to three.

The auxiliaries often had skills that the Roman legionaries lacked, in particular archery and horsemanship. To keep the danger of revolt to a minimum, auxiliaries were never stationed in the province where they were first recruited. For example, Dacians from Romania were stationed at Birdoswald, while Britons were stationed in Romania, Switzerland and North Africa. One of the Vindolanda tablets calls the Britons 'Brittunculi' or 'Little Britons', suggesting that some of the new recruits were not very impressive. When conquering territory, or garrisoning the frontiers, auxiliaries were used, because they were not considered as important as legionaries. They were also paid less! While legions were present in the north west, at Chester, the troops stationed in the Lake District were auxiliaries.

ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

TIMELINE

Print the **timeline cards** (CD Resource 1) onto card, or print onto paper then photocopy to card. Cut out the individual date cards. To make them reusable you could also laminate them.

With the class work out the correct order for the cards and display them, either by punching holes and threading them onto string, or by fixing to a wall or whiteboard. Highlight the position of the Roman invasion within the timeline as a whole.

OBSTACLE COURSE

This activity is designed to help children understand the problems the Roman army faced when travelling through Britain and conquering new territory.

In modern Britain, a journey from the south coast to Cumbria would be made by car, bus, train or even plane. The journey would take less than a day to complete. Children may have difficulty understanding how, 2000 years ago, such a journey could take thirty years. The journey took so long not only because the Romans had to walk but also because they had to build roads and towns as they advanced. Once they had established themselves in one place, they could move northwards to make further conquests.

Asking the children to make their own journey through a series of obstacles should be fun way to aid their understanding of the concept. There is a suggested obstacle course layout below. This activity may need to

take place during a timetabled PE lesson as you will need a large area in which to set out the obstacles.

Ask the children to work in small groups. Each group will need a **recording sheet** (CD Resource 2) and a stopwatch.

First ask each group to time one child walking the course without obstacles and record their time.

Then ask the groups to time the same individual walking the course again, but this time negotiating the obstacles. Again the time is recorded.

Next the whole group walks the course together, both with and without obstacles, recording their times for each journey.

The single child represents one person travelling alone. The group represents a legion. You could add a further obstacle, for example a tribe attacking the legion. This can be done by telling the legion to stand still or mime a battle when you clap or blow a whistle.

Children can tackle the last part of the worksheet, asking them to write down their ideas about problems the Romans faced on their journey, as a group or individually.

PLENARY – LOOKING AT THE MAPS

The **maps** of Roman and Celtic Britain (CD Resources 3 & 4) show where the Romans settled and built their roads, and also which Celtic tribes they would have met on their journey. The maps can be used to illustrate a discussion of the obstacles the Romans faced when they tried to conquer Britain and where they were successful in establishing forts and roads.

OBSTACLE COURSE LAYOUT

